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Title:

'Draft preamble' - 'The Australian Labor Party is a democratic Socialist party'.

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DRAFT PREAMBLE

The Australian Labor Party is a democratic Socialist Party. It seeks liberty for the Australian people. It believes that liberty is measured by the ability of individuals within society to do the things they desire, which are consistent with their membership of society. It believes that the basis of liberty is security for the individual and the family - the provision of full employment for those who will work, and of social assistance to the aged, the infirm and the needy. On this basis, it seeks to give the Australian people the greatest possible facilities for developing their talents and living their lives as they would wish. It recognises that liberty implies a measure of equality, and that to achieve liberty for the many the licence of the few to interfere with the freedom of others must be curtailed.

The Australian Labor Party believes that it can only achieve its aims by constitutional means - by persuading a majority of Australians to support its programmes - and that liberty is consistent only with the maintenance and extension of democratic processes of government - majority rule, freedom of speech, assembly, worship, organised opposition, freedom from arbitrary arrest and maintenance of the rule of law.

The Australian Labor Party believes that there are major obstacles to the liberty of Australians.

The first is that the Commonwealth Constitution prohibits any Australian Government - State or Federal - from carrying out the policies on which it was elected. The Australian people are thus not their own masters and decisions vital for their well-being cannot be made by representatives responsible to them.

The second is that within Australia the institution of joint stock companies has concentrated into the hands of a small group of company directors the effective control of banking, credit, heavy industry and the media of mass communication. These people decide the level of employment, the extent and direction of investment, the amount and kind of information the people shall receive, not in the public interest, but in the interests of private profit, and by their decisions determine the pattern of the lives of the majority of the community to whom they are in no way responsible.

The Australian Labor Party seeks to ensure that the decisions which so affect the lives of Australians shall be subject to the control of the people's elected representatives, whom they can always call to account, and who will remain answerable to them, and that free and independent news services will provide that full information to the Australian people which they are entitled to demand.

The Australian Labor Party believes that general economic planning must be done by the community as a whole, and that in modern times it is essential for the community to see that each sector of the economy is meeting the social needs of the community. The haphazard decisions of seekers after private profit has led to great misery for many in the past.

In the present, with hardly any sector of our economy not subject to the pressures of trusts, cartels, monopolies, or restrictive trade associations some form of public intervention may prove vital to maintain the well-being of our community. The Labor Party does not believe that there is any particular magic about either public or privately owned enterprise. Each has its place in our economy.

As to the mode of economic organisation of any sector of the economy the A.L.P. is empirical - its criterion for effective organisation is simply what works best for the greatest good of the people.

The A.L.P. rejects the capitalism espoused by the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party is financed by the great financial and business interests, to maintain their stranglehold on the economy, to foster and encourage the centralisation of economic power into a few private hands, to scale down the real value of Social Services, to redistribute income from the poor to the rich, and to sell community assets to private individuals.

The A.L.P. rejects the beliefs of the Communists. The A.L.P. is opposed to violent revolution, to enforced wholesale collectivisation, to the institution of "proleterian dictatorship" and the one-party State. It believes that in attempting to build an Utopia the Communists have been guilty of some of the worst tyrannies and terrors the world has yet known. The Australian Labor Party says it is impossible to build, as the Communists seek, a perfect static society.

The Australian Labor Party adheres to the principles of the United Nations Charter and believes that only through an effective international organisation in which all nations between whom tensions may arise are represented, can peace be ensured.